

Science Committee

Charge, Membership, and Guidelines

(Updated 01-19-2018)

About the Document

The Science Committee, at its Oct. 4, 2017, meeting refined this document as its working guidelines. The Committee may update as needed in the future.

Charge

The Salton Sea Science Committee charge is to provide scientific expertise and guidance on SSMP projects and efforts. The State or other committees will refer topics to the Science Committee.

Topics: Hydrology | Biology | Air Quality | Adaptive Management

Members

Carol	Roberts	CHAIR. USFWS (Selenium and Other Contaminants)
Tom	Anderson	USFWS (Avian)
Michael	Anderson	UC Riverside (Water & Water Quality)
Doug	Barnum	USGS (Selenium and other Contaminants)
Steve	Bigley	Coachella Valley Water District (Water & Water Quality)
Tim	Bradley	UC Irvine (Aquatic)
Steve	Charlton	Imperial Irrigation District (Water Quality)
Mike	Chotkowski	USGS (Biology)
Amato	Evan	UCSD (Scripps Institution of Oceanography) (Air Quality)
Andrea	Jones	Audubon California (Avian)
Kurt	Leuschner	College of the Desert (Biology)
Jeong-Hee	Lim	Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Quality)
Jason	Low	South Coast Air Pollution Control Dist. (Air Quality)
Robert	McKernan	Oasis Bird Observatory (Birds)
Kathy	Molina	LA County Natural History Museum (Birds)
Geoff	Schladow	UC Davis (Water and Water Quality)
Dave	Shuford	Point Blue Conservation (Birds)
Ramona	Swenson	ESA Associates (Aquatic)
Earl	Withycombe	CARB (Air Quality)

Membership Criteria

The Science Committee members are chosen by the Assistant Secretary for Salton Sea Policy in collaboration with the Science Committee chair. Persons selected as members must be technically qualified experts in their field and have experience interpreting complex data. Examples of the areas of expertise necessary are water supply, water quality, air quality,

selenium and other contaminants, avian, or aquatic species. They must be able to analyze detailed scientific data and understand its significance relative to Salton Sea management. The scientific experts who advise the State of California on the Salton Sea should possess comprehensive, unbiased, and up-to-date knowledge and demonstrate an ability to integrate data and information across multiple disciplines. Members are selected based solely on their experience and technical qualifications in the topics the committees will address. Advanced degrees (M.S., PhD) are preferred but not required if sufficient or unique technical expertise is demonstrated. Employees of State agencies responsible for implementing the SSMP are precluded from membership.

The size of the Science Committee is kept small by design to facilitate most routine evaluations. For issues or topics deemed too complex for the committee to handle internally, a request will be made to the SSMP to hold an expert workshop and development of a whitepaper on the resulting recommendations of the workshop. Additionally, the Science Committee will certainly request the assistance of DWR and DFW staff in understanding various aspects of the State's program.

Science Committee Guidelines

1. This committee is expected to aid the State of California in reviewing various plans being developed for Resource Management at the Salton Sea. In doing so, previous similar committees were instructed to “critique, but do not offer solutions to the critique”. This committee is requested to provide scientific input to identify strengths and weaknesses in evaluating any matter put before the committee. The committee is further expected to provide scientific guidance to rectify any identified weakness if available.
2. The role of the committee is advisory to the State and the Committee is not a decision-making entity.
3. Committee members are expected to provide their best scientific guidance without fear of retribution or any effect on funding or collaboration.
4. Committee members are asked to conduct themselves in the highest ethical manner.
5. Committee members should feel comfortable in voicing their opinions and concerns and are expected to do so.
6. Committee members should refrain from providing opinions based on agency or client viewpoints – base opinions and comments on the best available science.

7. All committee members will have their names, positions, and affiliations recorded and listed for all documents.
8. While it is desirable to achieve consensus recommendations it is not a requirement. Recommendations will be made on the basis of majority opinions. However, minority opinions will be recorded and reported also.
9. Conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, shall be avoided. If a Committee member has directly participated, is currently participating in the conduct or development of research associated with a scientific proposal being considered by the Committee, that Committee member must recuse themselves prior to that proposal coming before the Committee. The Committee member must also recuse themselves from discussions and decisions related to a proposal before the committee if the member would benefit either financially or personally from a proposal, even if they are not participating in the work directly. The reasons for the recusal shall be communicated to the Assistant Secretary for Salton Sea Policy and the Chair of the Committee prior to the meeting, and to the whole Committee at the initiation of discussion.

If a Committee member has directly participated in the analysis and/or development or will directly participate in the review and approval of a regulatory proposal being considered by the Committee, and that individual's participation would constitute a conflict of interest for the individual or their agency, that Committee member must recuse her/himself when that proposal comes before the Committee. The reasons for the recusal shall be communicated to the State Lead and the Chair of the Committee prior to the meeting, and to the whole Committee at the initiation of discussion. The recused Committee member may be requested to respond to technical questions from the Committee during the discussion of the regulatory proposal, but that Committee member is not to provide any information or opinion on matters other than that those addressed in the question(s) posed.

10. While the agenda of the Committee and the decisions arrived at by the Committee are matters of public knowledge and are publicly communicated, Committee members are expected to refrain from discussing Committee deliberations outside of Committee membership. However, Committee members may report back to their institutional affiliation on the results of Committee discussions and actions.
11. Committee members reserve the freedom to express their own opinions as members of the public to media representatives, but not opinions of others or on behalf of the

committee. Participants can refer media inquiries to members for individual comments or to the Assistant Secretary of Natural Resources for comments on committee deliberations and outcomes.

12. If Committee members experience attempts to influence their opinions, they should explain that the Committee provides recommendations and does not make final decisions. If Committee members feel that the attempts to influence their opinions are coercive or inappropriate, they should report these attempts to both the Assistant Secretary for Salton Sea Policy and the Chair of the Committee.